

Rural Ireland 2040

Building Factories and offices on the outskirts of rural towns and villages can only go so far in developing the rural economy without ultimately destroying the rural nature, attractive to residents and to visitors alike...

An alternative concept is to create incentives for attracting high skilled high salaried home workers, who can utilize high speed internet to work from home. Government needs an active program to attract such people, particularly from the diaspora. 60% of Irish Americans say they would like to retire to rural Ireland. Many senior managers in companies across the world are able to work from home. These people could as well work from Rural Ireland as a prelude to retirement.

If government grants were available to save derelict rural properties this could have a win-win effect. Working from Ireland and paying Irish taxes would bolster the tax take, the rural housing infrastructure would be improved, local employment would be created. In addition by bringing such people into the community, the outlook and aspirations of young rural people would be raised.

The ingredients of such a plan would be

- Availability of improvement grants
- Some kind of tax break for farmers to sell of these derelict properties
- Creation of information resources on “how to bring your job to Ireland” (surprisingly easy but not publicised)
- A marketing campaign aimed at the diaspora.
- Some kind of agency help (Could be through a web site) to enable the interested parties to get started.

The vision is much wealthier Irish rural areas, still in general sparsely populated but now including additional “high tech” residents who want to contribute....